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Communist Party And Political Asylum

THE STALINIST campaign against the right of asylum for Trotsky is meeting with serious reverses.

The Stalinists had banked heavily on the ability of Lombardo Toledano, unofficial Soviet representative in Mexico and secretary of the CTM (Federation of Mexican Workers), to supply them with a "workingclass" protest against Trotsky's asylum in Mexico. But Toledano has been unable to deliver the goods. At this writing, he has had several meetings of his Executive Committee without securing from it an endorsement of his anti-Trotsky line. In addition, some of the most powerful unions of the CTM have declared for Trotsky's asylum, among them the Oil Workers, the Graphic Arts Unions, the Federation of Construction Workers. The December issue of the official organ of the Construction Federation has just arrived; much of it is devoted to telegrams sent by unions to President Cardenas supporting his granting of refuge to Trotsky.

In America, the Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky has secured the adherence of perhaps the largest and most distinguished group of intellectuals and publicists ever joined together for a defense issue. Its first public meeting, December 18th in New York City, filled the Hotel Center with 2500 people packed to the doors, over a thousand more turned away, and with nearly a thousand dollars in the collection. It is bringing out for mass distribution a book, "World Voices on the Moscow Trial," compiled by Sidney Hook and Max Nomad, of representative labor and liberal opinion in the leading countries. Local subcommittees of the American Committee are beginning to function in San Francisco, Boston, Minneapolis, Chicago, and other cities.

New York Meeting

The American Stalinist lynch campaign against Trotsky came to a sudden hiatus after the enormously successful New York meeting. The only DAILY WORKER comment on the meeting came several days later, in a whining article addressed to Norman Thomas. The article made no mention of the speeches of Suzanne La Follette, James T. Farrell, and Max Shachtman; was equally silent about the extraordinary impression created when Herbert Solow, as his American editor, read excerpts from Carl Von Ossietzky's writings excoriating earlier frame-ups engineered by Stalin. The article mentioned Norman Thomas' speech only to pervert it. And it concentrated on a few remarks by Max Eastman in which he stated a position of his own in the Soviet Union which, as he said, is not "shared by the orthodox Trotskyists." Thomas, who followed Eastman, while pointing out that he and Eastman differed, vigorously emphasized that the issues involved in Trotsky's case were clear and unambiguous.

The considerable space devoted to an accurate picture of the meeting in the Socialist and the Jewish press, effectively spiked the Stalinist distortions.

The SOCIALIST CALL and LABOR ACTION have commented adequately on the issues dealt with at the New York mass meeting. A few words need to be said, however, on the "closing remarks at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, C.P.U.S.A. December 6," of Earl Browder, which were printed together with much other display stuff in the December 17th "DAILY WORKER."

Browder justifies hostility to Trotsky's right of asylum anywhere, on the ground that Trotsky has been proved an assassin. And in the course of justifying this position, Browder revises, in all fundamentals, the attitude of Bolshevism toward asylum in capitalist countries. We can touch on only a few points:

1. Marxists have **never** fought to limit asylum in capitalist countries to revolutionists only. On the contrary, one could cite numerous instances when Marxists defended the right to asylum of **capitalist, reactionary refugees**. And in **no case** have Marxists campaigned **against** asylum for any capitalist refugee seeking to enter a capitalist country. Why? Because Marxists know that **any** limitation on the right of asylum, like **any** limitation on any democratic right, will inevitably be utilized against workers' use of the given democratic right. For example, no revolutionary Marxist has ever supported a bill depriving political groups of the right to meet, publish a paper, etc., because no matter how explicitly framed to refer to reactionaries, such a bill would inevitably be used against the labor movement. The blind hatred of Stalinism against Trotsky has thus reached the point of wiping out the fundamental foundations of the Marxist position on democratic rights.

Police Psychology of Stalinists

2. "We are against asylum anywhere in the world for those who make assassination their weapon of political struggle, no matter who they may be," declares Browder. And as examples, he mentions the assassinations of King Alexander and French Minister Barthou!

What is the traditional Bolshevik position on this question? We need only refer to the celebrated case of the assassination of the Russian reactionary, Colonel Trepov, by Very Zasulich. Though Marxists fought against assassination as a political weapon, nevertheless the Bolsheviks did not condemn her. Thanks to the European labor movement, she secured asylum in Switzerland. And there none other than Lenin sat with Vera Zasulich on the board of "Iskra," the first Bolshevik paper! Yet these Stalinists have grown so utterly cor-

rupt that they dare to ascribe to Leninism the police-psychology of refusing asylum to those representatives of the national minorities who, if mistaken in their weapons of political struggle, nevertheless fought against King Alexander and Barthou from progressive considerations!

3. "We will" declares Browder "support every sincere effort to outlaw assassination by international agreements." This is even more serious a revision of Marxism than the previous points. All any capitalist nation need do, after making such an international agreement—the Soviet government has already proposed such agreements—is to accuse a political exile of murder, try him in his absence and secure a verdict of guilty, and then demand he be turned over to the hangman by the authorities of the country where he has taken refuge. Is this not exactly what Hitler has just attempted to secure from Switzerland in the case of the Communist Heinz Neumann? In 1916 Russian soldiers in Marseilles mutinied and killed their colonel; Trotsky, as editor of *Nashe Slovo*,

was accused of inciting them to assassination, and was expelled from France. According to the Stalinist proposal to "outlaw assassination by international agreements," Trotsky would then have received asylum nowhere else. One could list a dozen other examples of what this reactionary Stalinist doctrine implies. But enough. Stalinism is attempting to wipe out the classical Bolshevik position on the right of asylum!

As to the alleged motivation for Stalinist revisionism, namely that Trotsky plotted to assassinate Soviet leaders, the American Socialist party has declared itself ready to give the Stalin government an opportunity to meet Trotsky face to face before an international workingclass commission. Trotsky himself has repeatedly declared his desire to be heard before such a commission. But Stalinism dare not face such a commission, it has no case which will stand up outside of a Stalin-controlled court. Every Socialist should patiently explain to Communist party members what a revelation of bankruptcy is stored in these facts.

His Excellency's Loyal Opposition

BY JAMES BURNHAM

BORIS SOUVARINE, in his monumental work on Stalin, preserves an unusual degree of objectivity. He is not, however, able to avoid a cry of pain and an apology to his reader when he finds it necessary to quote from the speeches or writings of Stalin's protagonists. And, indeed, the influence of the style of the great chief of the world proletariat—that style compounded of "elementary dogmas, reworked platitudes, tiresome repetitions stated with that accent of absolute certainty which betrays utter ignorance"—is perhaps not the least among his sins. For the parrot-like imitation by which the little chiefs throughout the Comintern try to insure their term of office includes, alas, imitation of the indescribably tedious style of their master.

I hesitate, therefore, to recommend study of little chief Browder's report to the Central Committee Plenum, delivered on December 4th, and reprinted in the *DAILY WORKER* of December 14th. Browder is so apt a parrot as to reproduce even that ponderous and pointless humor for which his leader earned the oft-repeated (and, when you come to think it over, rather sinister) epithet of "genial"—"I hope you will pardon me," says Browder, "if I do not go into the details of the love affairs of King Edward." Perhaps at that point the delegates breathed an inward sigh, and hitched forward in their seats, resolved to demonstrate that loyal Stalinists can stay awake even through 30,000 words of undeviating sterility.

Nevertheless, this document is of great importance for the next months in the political development of the labor movement in this country. It begins a new phase in the application of Popular Frontism in the United States, and as such we must, however painfully, analyze and evaluate certain of its features.

Under the Banner of Class Collaboration

Stalinism has always been under the necessity of playing a perpetual masquerade. It must always dress up its treachery in a Marxist costume. The reason for this is easy to understand: the prestige of Stalin and his bureaucracy among the masses both of the Soviet Union and in the rest of the world depends primarily upon the preservation of the illusion that the bureaucracy is the true inheritor and defender of the October Revolution. Belief

in this illusion will, in the minds of many sincere workers, cover a vast multitude of crimes. Belief in this illusion would scarcely hold up if Stalin were to declare: "We have altogether abandoned the international revolution; we have given up the class struggle; we are liquidating the revolution inside of the Soviet Union; we are interested only in the maintenance of our own power and privilege; for this end we are prepared to sacrifice the workers in Germany, Austria, Spain or elsewhere, and to turn them over to the imperialist war in any country that will ally itself with us or promise neutrality." This is the actual policy of Stalin; but, to be acceptable, it must be hidden in an elaborate context of the traditional and time-honored phrases of Marxism and Leninism. These phrases stimulate a favorable emotional response in the hearer, producing a kind of mental anesthesia under which the treacherous needle can be inserted without any effective opposition from the patient. This method is not new. Rosmer's magnificent study of the labor movement during the war, for example, shows in detail how working-class slogans were used by the reformists in 1914 to prepare the way, step by step, for the emergence of full-blown social-patriotism. The workers were led to slaughter as a sacred Marxist and proletarian duty.

The present policy of the Communist International, however, is so excessively opportunist and reactionary that it becomes increasingly difficult even to preserve the phrases; the mask itself becomes a handicap. And this is a first major point to observe in connection with Browder's report: in this entire, enormous document, the class struggle—the foundation-stone of Marxism—is not once, not a single time referred to. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," declares *THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO*. "... Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature; it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat." From the depths of Browder's abandoned past, the stirring words seem to re-echo: "The world is divided more openly and consciously than at any previous time into two camps" But do not deceive yourself into imagining that this division is a **class** division; such a

notion is a slander of our enemies, and, as Browder puts it, "hides the most essential fact." The division, of course, is between the "fascist nations" on the one hand and the "non-fascist peace-loving nations" on the other.

Along with the abandonment of the class struggle goes, naturally, the class analysis of the state. As Marxists we were once taught that the state in every class society was the executive committee of the dominant class. But that was in the old, pre-Popular Front era. Now it is only in fascist countries that such a dreadful condition holds: "In Germany, Italy, Japan and their satellites, reaction and fascism are ascendant and carry on civil war against the people through the government." In democratic capitalist countries (especially in the United States, where reaction was in November so decisively defeated) all is well, except that the democratic chieftains have a certain tendency to give way to the pressure of reaction, which must be reprovved from time to time by "the people."

In the first nine-tenths of Browder's report, socialism is not even mentioned, literally not mentioned. The last section gives it a pious nod or two. And for what purpose? In order to explain why we must abandon our program for socialism: "We can organize and rouse them (the majority)—provided we do not demand of them that they agree with our socialist program, but unite with them **on the basis of their program which we make also our own** (my emphasis: J. B.)." The last phrase is the most revealing—Popular Frontism summarized in a single line.

The policies outlined in Browder's report are not, it is true, a new departure. They have been present from the beginning in the ideas and practices of the People's Front. What is new is the blatant and open way in which they are expressed. And this marks, in turn, a new phase in the development of the People's Front, a phase observable throughout the world movement.

In this country, the Communist party, as evidenced by this report, proposes to function not even in the disguise of a party of revolutionary opposition to capitalism, but quite openly as a party of "loyal opposition"—that is, as a party whose opposition is conceived of as revolving wholly within the framework of the existing order. "The Communists," declares the **Manifesto**, "disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution." The Stalinists, also, Browder is anxious to make clear, do not wish to conceal their views. Let the ruling class be reassured: we promise and guarantee not to interfere with your domination—if only, if only you will in turn give us some crumbs of hope that you will be on the "right side" in the coming war.

The Communist Party and Roosevelt

As head of the loyal opposition, Browder reviews the election campaign. With full satisfaction he notes the complete success of the first and primary aim of the Communist strategy: "The first objective was the defeat of Landon: This was accomplished to a degree far surpassing all expectations . . . this aim we shared with the largest number of people . . . Without exaggerating our role in bringing about this result, we can safely say that the weight of each individual Communist in the struggle was far higher, many fold, than that of the members of any other political group in America." He has a number of apologetic words to offer for the Communist party's independent presidential ticket. But it was forced on us! If only "a national Farmer-Labor party . . ." had "decided to place Roosevelt at the head of the ticket nationally . . ." "Would we have refrained from putting forward our own independent tickets and supported the Farmer-Labor party ticket even with Roo-

sevelt at the head? I venture to say that under such circumstances we would almost surely have done so."

And how do things look now, with reaction so roundly trounced? Of course, Roosevelt "cannot be relied upon"; but if we keep applying pressure, "he will turn left." Meanwhile, we will try not to inconvenience him. We will even delay formation of a national Farmer-Labor party. There are many progressive tendencies inside as well as outside of the old parties. "There is a fear among many progressives of prematurely forming such a party and thereby narrowing it down . . . Our experience in Washington and California confirms the correctness of this judgment. There is not the slightest doubt that we were correct in establishing the united front of these movements which were not yet independent of the Democratic party . . ." "This broader unity (of the People's Front) will have to, for a time, at least, include in most places forces outside and inside of the two old parties." We shall, of course, have to develop a legislative program, around which—"to build up a progressive bloc in Congress." We will do this in union with "progressive forces," making "such compromises as will be necessary to get a working relationship with the other (!) progressives who have different ideas from us."

The WPA cuts are something of an irritation. They sink, however, into insignificance alongside the mighty progressive step of the re-elected Administration: "The speech made by Secretary of State Hull, at the Inter-American Peace Conference, is of great significance. It was a contribution to the mobilization of the anti-fascist forces of the world in the struggle against war, for the maintenance of peace, not only in the Americas, but everywhere . . ." (The TIMES is less fulsome.) As a loyal opposition, naturally, "there are . . . points in Secretary Hull's program where we will have to register some differences of opinion . . ." (but only in the politest manner). Remember, you carping critics, that "the main significance of this speech is that America is more and more emerging as the greatest power of the capitalist world on the side of peace, and against the fascist war makers . . ." And, somehow, Browder seems to have overlooked the new bombers, battleships, tanks and observation planes, the construction of which was announced by the Administration simultaneously with Hull's departure for Buenos Aires. Or is the omission not altogether accidental? Might its inclusion have suggested even to the uninitiated some other import to this grandiose South American junket, this spectacular step forward in the well laid war plans of U. S. imperialism? Like the documents of that other loyal opposition, the Republican party, Browder's entire report contains not one single word on United States armament and military expenditures. Well and proudly can Browder claim: "No one can deny that we thoroughly established our party as an American party, that our slogan—Communism is 20th Century Americanism,—registered deeply with the American people." ("The Communists," says the **Manifesto**, "are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationalities . . ." (Ah, most unkind and slanderous reproach, laments this 20th Century American.) And the MANIFESTO continues: "The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got."

Communist Party and the A. F. of L.—C.I.O.

A reformist political line cannot be isolated into any supra-mundane sphere of "pure politics." It must show its effects on every arena of the class struggle. We thus find during the past two years a progressive development of the People's Front strategy as applied to Communist party activities in the trade unions and unemployed organizations. Browder's report guarantees that during the next months this development will be carried

unprecedented steps further. The basis of the People's Front is class collaboration; and we know from past experience of reformism what this means on the trade union field.

Are the reactionary trade union bureaucrats agents of the class enemy within the working class? Do their policies act as the major brake to militant class consciousness within the unions? This is what Marxism has always taught, but no one could possibly learn this lesson from however careful a reading of Browder's report. Nowhere is there any explanation of or even reference to the role of the trade union bureaucracy. Nowhere is there even any sharp criticism of specific policies of the bureaucrats. A passing phrase about Ryan's role in the Maritime Strike (one of the most vicious pieces of treachery in the entire history of the American labor movement—and it is allotted a passing phrase), the conventional witticism about Hutcheson voting the Carpenters' International from his vest pocket; and that is virtually all.

Nor is this, also, an accident. The policy of class collaboration forces the Stalinists to abandon more and more the fighting struggle for economic demands, and through that struggle the raising of the level of class consciousness, for the practice of trying to curry favor with the bureaucrats, of settling disputes through deals behind the scenes, of relying on governmental arbitration boards and mediators. The Communist work in the unions must be subordinated to the great aim of achieving in this country a mass, classless People's Front; to secure the adherence of a union to a Negro Congress or an American League Conference or a Farmer-Labor Progressive what-not or a Social Security Assembly is far more important than to get it to prepare and win a militant strike.

The results are already widely present within the labor movement, though not yet so widely recognized. In the WPA sit-downs, the Stalinists and the supervisors together explain why the workers must be peaceful and go home. In the Federation of Teachers the general fight against the Boards of Education is deprecated, dual organizations are met with conciliation, and the open struggle against the A. F. of L. Executive Council and for the C.I.O. principles is shunted aside. In the Cafeteria Workers there is disclosed an ironbound alliance between the Stalinists and the older racketeers. The furriers, the wild men of the Third Period, turn "respectable," and devote their energies against the progressives and revolutionists in the union. Ben Gold, who roared for five years like an untameable lion, speaks now like the mildest lamb. In the United Textile Workers, the Stalinists at the Convention come to the rescue of the reactionary officials. On the Pacific Coast, among the Maritime Unions, the Stalinists first try to put over the I.S.U. proposals on the Sailors, then attempt to head off the strike, then insist that it be delayed until after the elections (so as not to injure Roosevelt), and are forestalled only by the militant stand of the Sailors' Union.

This trend will continue and increase. The Communist party now functions in the unions as a reactionary force, and the progressive movement in the unions will have to be built not along with but against it.

These conclusions are impressively illustrated in Browder's report by the treatment of the A.F. of L.—C.I.O. struggle. The progressive movement within the trade unions at the present time, as socialists have made clear, must proceed in accordance with the basic slogans: for industrial unionism; for organization of the basic mass industries; for a class struggle policy; for trade union democracy. Every one of these slogans, taken individually or together, dictates repudiation of the policies

and course of the A.F. of L. bureaucracy, and determined, though of course critical, support of the C.I.O., not because the C.I.O. as at present constituted and with its present leadership is the sufficient answer to the needs of the workers (indeed, through its fundamental class collaborationism and its violation of intra-union democracy, it acts even now and will in the future act to an increasing extent counter to the needs of the workers), but because in the light of the real and actual conditions of the present, the **direction** of the C.I.O. is the direction of advance for the labor movement in this country, just as the direction of the A.F. of L. officialdom is the direction of decay and disintegration. **As against** the A.F. of L. bureaucracy, therefore, we must, whole-heartedly and unambiguously, support the C.I.O., and only such an attitude at present is compatible with progressive trade-unionism.

Browder, however, formulates the entire Communist party policy for the next period around the slogan of "unity." "We shall," he says, "redouble our efforts in the fight for trade union unity, for the unity of the American Federation of Labor." "We think that it would be harmful if any unions were divided, one section going to the C.I.O., the other to the A.F. of L. . . . under no conditions do we carry that fight on in such a way as to make a split in that union . . . For example, in the probable organization of some sections of heavy machinery, we will have the problem of whether these new unions shall go into the Machinists or into some of the other unions, whether it be the Amalgamated Association, or what not. Generally, we have been clear on this last question. We refused to use our forces to carry sections of newly organized workers away from the jurisdictional claims of the Machinists Union over into some of the industrial unions, where there was a fear that this would intensify rivalries and sharpen the split."

Now, no one will argue against the desirability of trade union unity, nor will anyone "advocate" splits. Nevertheless, it is always the concrete content of unity, not unity as an abstract slogan, that is important. And, under the present circumstances in the labor movement, the fight for unity itself can be understood only as a fight under the slogans of progressive unionism stated above, and—translated into organizational terms—for the C.I.O. movement as against the Executive Council. Such a fight alone makes possible the re-integration of the A.F. of L. on a basis that would mean an advance and not a defeat; and such a fight is equally necessary to prevent the C.I.O. officials themselves from betraying the movement which at present they lead. Re-integration, of course, may not be possible without capitulation; and if this is the case, then we must be prepared to face the full consequences—prepared to face the necessity for the building of a new Federation; and the conduct of our campaign will have laid the basis for such an eventuality.

The campaign of the Communist party, on the contrary, conceived as outlined in Browder's report, will disorient the progressive struggle. It will block the sharp and fruitful fight against the policies of the Executive Council; and at the same time will contribute to reactionary tendencies on the part of the C.I.O. officials. We may expect, to an increasing extent, to discover its results in one union after another—as, indeed, they have already been discovered in a number of specific instances: for example, in the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, and at the Convention of the Federation of Teachers (where Stalinist influence smothered clear-cut support of the C.I.O.) With crucial days approaching for the trade unions in this country, this prospect, unless checked by the genuinely progressive forces in the labor movement, presents possibilities of incalculable damage.

The Communist Party, War and Spain

During the past three months the Comintern's war policy has taken a major step: it has passed from veiled, hidden, and hypocritical social-patriotism into open social-patriotism. Here, as elsewhere, it has become more and more difficult to utilize even the Marxist **language**, with the Marxist content left so utterly behind. In the case of the war policy, this is to be observed especially in France, where it is symbolized strikingly by Thorez' call for a "French Front" to replace the Popular Front, and by the Salengro incident. It should be remembered that the "crime" of which Salengro was accused was—that he had not been an ardent social patriot: a crime, moreover, of which (according to the defense of Socialists, Communists, and Salengro himself) he was entirely innocent. The present Communist posters in France directed against Hitler and the Nazis are exactly on a par, even artistically, with the French posters during the war; and, as Daladier reports with pleasure, all parties of the Popular Front are now whole-heartedly behind the French "defense program."

The war crisis is not so acute in this country, and we find less attention paid to it by Browder. Nevertheless, it is to be remarked that Browder no longer pays even lip service to the Marxist conception of war as inherent in capitalism and flowing necessarily from capitalist class contradictions. The only cause of war mentioned by Browder is "Fascist aggression." His deep satisfaction with the Buenos Aires meeting is because, "in spite of all its short-comings, the Inter-American Peace Conference does constitute a move against the fascist aggression"—that is, does seem to him to mark a step in the alignment of American imperialism on "the right side" in the coming war. It is now **taken for granted** that we will support an imperialist war "for democracy against fascism."

Browder correctly points out that the war problem is now concentrated in "the question of Spain." And on Spain, "our slogan is 'everything to defend Spanish democracy'." This slogan deserves a pause. Spanish democracy—i.e., the bourgeois-democratic government in Spain—is threatened in two ways: from one direction, by Franco, who wishes to substitute for it a bourgeois-fascist government, the better to maintain capitalist property relations and bourgeois power; from the other, by the revolutionary workers of Spain, whose problems can be solved only by the overthrow of all forms of bourgeois government, and the establishment of a workers' state. The Communist party is impartial: it announces that it will defend the bourgeois-democratic state—and give "everything" in its defense—both against the Fascist counter-revolution, **and against the proletarian revolution**. And that it means what it says is being rapidly and thoroughly demonstrated in Spain itself, where the Stalinists have launched an incredible campaign against all those revolutionists and near-revolutionists in Spain who define the issue as "socialism against capitalism" and in any way call for a workers' government. The Comintern's social-patriotism is—it could not be otherwise—bound up with an anti-revolutionary policy in a revolutionary crisis.

The Communist Party and the Socialist Party

In my earlier remarks on Browder's style, I should have listed one exception. There is one subject, many times referred to during the course of the report, where something of the old fire is felt, one subject in dealing with which Browder's words seem to spring to vitality and life. This subject is—the Socialist party. And this, too, is not accidental. For the sentences and paragraphs about the Socialist party are the heart and soul of the

report. It is they that give the dominant line of the Communist Party for the next months; the task therein formulated is the chief task.

Browder is severely critical and deeply grieved at the course of the S.P. Let us see what it is that bothers him. The S.P., he says, "came out in principle against the People's Front in America and advocated its liquidation in France and Spain . . . it denounced Labor's Non-Partisan League . . . It came to an unprincipled split with its local organizations, which had somewhat of a mass base in Connecticut and Pennsylvania; it split with the New York Old Guard which had trade union connections . . ." Consequently, "we must offer to all sincere Socialists our sympathetic help in solving their difficult problems."

It is clear enough. Browder is in despair because the S.P. has refused to succumb to his own opportunist and reformist course. He is deeply indignant because the S.P. has cast from its back the dragging weight of the reactionary and stultifying Old Guard (how much easier his problem would be if the Old Guard were still with us!). He is shocked because in the elections the S.P. insisted on making an independent working-class campaign. He froths at the mouth because the S.P. will not go over to support of the imperialist war, but puts forward the policies of the militant struggle against war. In a word, and in general, he grinds his teeth over the fact that the S.P. steadily advances toward the revolutionary road, and refuses to dissolve itself into the unholy social-patriotic brew which he has cooked up under the label of the People's Front.

Let no one be so naive as to imagine that I exaggerate. The one great barricade in Browder's happy class-collaborationist path is the Socialist party. On every other topic his sentences are larded with a smug and heavy complacency. On the S.P. alone does irritation break through. And his attitude is fully justified: to smash the S.P. as a revolutionary or potentially revolutionary force is the one absolutely essential pre-condition to the success of Browder's strategy. If he cannot accomplish this, then all his well-laid plans must ignominiously fail.

Browder does not content himself with mere abstract analysis. By no means. He explains the strategy that should be employed in smashing the S.P. Trotsky-baiting, naturally, in the best Hearstian manner, has a prominent place. Every left-wing statement and act must be tarred and feathered as "Trotskyist" (i.e., the deed of a counter-revolutionary assassin); every effort to resist the Stalinist ideology or to move positively in a revolutionary direction. There are at least half a dozen jabs at Norman Thomas' Trotskyism. And it was, of all things, Trotskyism which forced the S.P. to conduct an independent campaign. Even Scott Nearing, with his recent comments on "the C.P. taking the 'reformist' road of people's front and the S.P. becoming the 'revolutionary' party" is "influenced by the Trotskyite tendency of thought."

What, then, are we to do about this devastating plague of "Trotskyism" (read: left-wing socialism, revolutionary Marxism)? Browder gives the answer, so far as the next few months are concerned, in an astoundingly brazen manner: "The only way to rid the Socialist party of Trotskyite influence is by concentrating the struggle for the expulsion of the Trotskyites against their most apparently harmful manifestations. The Socialist party has called a special convention for next March, as you know. **We must consult with the best elements in the Socialist party about their problems in the most helpful way** (!—my emphasis: J. B.). . . . They must prepare for the March convention of the Socialist party to get results, to win the Socialist party for the united front and make a clear break with the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites."

There it is, in just so many words. The major efforts of the Communist party for the next three months are to be devoted to—the attempt to split the Socialist party, to tear it apart, to destroy it as any kind of effective force, and then to gather together its bedraggled remnants tied hand and foot into the straight-jacket of People's Frontism and social-patriotism.

A carefully laid plan, a plan to take your breath away. But we can take comfort from Bobbie Burns' reminder that "the best laid plans of mice and men" (and who will deny that Browder has in him something of the mouse as well as of the man?) "gang aft aglae." Our party, above all the developing left wing, will have an adequate answer to this shameless lackey of a traitor-master.

Proposed Solutions to the Spanish Crisis

By FELIX MORROW

1. The Italo-German Solution

DURING the great strike wave of February-July, 1936, in Spain, when time after time the number on strike vaulted the million mark and when, despite Right Wing Socialist and Stalinist expressions of loyalty to the government, the masses under Left Wing Socialist, C. N. T. and P. O. U. M. leadership gave clear evidence of their willingness to fight for socialism, the reactionaries were already in contact with the Italian and German governments. Spanish reaction saw the only out in crushing every vestige of the trade union movement, and naturally turned for aid to those regimes which had already followed that path. Surreptitious aid before and after July 17th was followed by official recognition. We have said repeatedly that the act of recognition signified that Italy and Germany were thereby tying their fate irrevocably to the fate of France; and the shipment of regular troops by Hitler and Mussolini is merely a preliminary indication of the lengths they are prepared to go.

Nevertheless, Hitler and Mussolini, despite much sentimental propaganda to the contrary, are not madmen but shrewd capitalist politicians. Their primary objective in Spain is to crush the possibilities of social revolution, to make it impossible for the Spanish proletariat to usher in a new revolutionary period in Europe; and if the other major capitalist powers can show them a better way to decapitate the Spanish revolution or, if not a better way, a sufficiently efficacious way which will have the decisive virtue of being acceptable also to France and England, then no serious person, certainly no Marxist, should doubt that Hitler and Mussolini will accept such a "compromise."

2. The Anglo-French Solution

Such a compromise is now being offered them by the Anglo-French bloc.

The Anglo-French proposal, accepted in principle by both the Spanish People's Front Government and by the Soviet Government, provides for an armistice followed by an internationally-supervised plebiscite. This means, in plain language, the settlement of the Spanish crisis by the simple expedient of establishing the present division of Spain as the status-quo. Because a plebiscite conducted in the territory held by Franco's forces obviously will not mean that the plebiscite commission will guarantee any democratic rights to the population; in the midst of white terror the masses will be called to cast their ballots. Such an election will have no more reality than one held by Mussolini or Hitler. And, with diplomatic gravity, the result will be held to legalize Franco's regime. Then, with the pressure of Franco's police-state from one side, and with the "anti-fascist" bourgeoisie backed by the European powers on the other side, bourgeois regimes will be consolidated in Biscay, Valencia and Catalonia.

Italy-Germany will thus have their recognition of Franco validated by "the world," for the small price of conceding a division of labor between Franco and Azafia-

Compans. France-England will face their masses with the arguments that the best had to be made of a bad bargain and that in any event peace has been preserved in Europe. The Spanish people will be dismembered throwing it back to the confusion of Italy and Germany before 1870. Fascism will have registered another great triumph. The European proletariat will have received a blow comparable only to those to which it was subjected by the triumph of Italian and German fascism.

The rapprochement between the "democratic" powers and the fascist powers on this basis is certainly nearing. The "gentlemen's agreement," soon to be signed between Italy and England, guaranteeing the territorial status quo in the Mediterranean, is but a beginning. But its consummation was followed by a statement, conciliatory toward England, in Germany's semi-official "Diplomatische Korrespondenz". There will be many bellicose utterances from Hitler and Mussolini, "strong" pressure declarations from Britain and France. But the main current is definitely setting in the direction of the Anglo-French solution.

3. The "Anti-Fascist" Bourgeoisie

The unofficial but authoritative spokesman for the British foreign office, Augur, reports in the New York Times of December 17 that "the British have been working to promote local armistices between the Rebels and Loyalists. The offer of the Basque regional government at Bilbao to conclude a Christmas armistice was directly due to discreet intervention by British agents who hope this may lead to a complete suspension of hostilities." We need only add to this significant statement that from the first the Basque bourgeoisie has desired no bitter-end struggle. Catholic, masters of the second most important industrial, commercial and financial center (Bilbao), their desire for autonomy and their consequent grievances against the centralizing program of the reactionaries was not sufficient to overcome their hatred of the proletarian forces of Catalonia. The Basque bourgeoisie surrendered San Sebastian intact, and then settled down to months of inactivity, apparently waiting to see which side would win. It is not from Bilbao, but from radical Santander and the Asturias that the push against Burgos is now coming. The Basque bourgeoisie is more than ready to accept the Anglo-French plan.

Augur goes on to say that "the French are exercising similar influence in Barcelona, where their success is less marked because the desires of President Luis Companys of the Catalan Generalidad to end the bloodshed have been overawed by the Communists and Anarchists." So Companys is ready "to end the bloodshed," i. e., to adopt the Anglo-French plan. A considerable section of the Catalan "anti-fascist" bourgeoisie, indeed, tried to carry out that plan before its sponsors announced it. A Catalan delegation proposed over a month ago in Paris—the matter leaked into the press—to have the European powers agree to recognition of an independent bourgeois republic in Catalonia, which in turn would recognize Franco's regime. A plot to carry this out by assassinat-

ing the workers' leaders and seizing control of Catalonia was frustrated, thanks to the vigilance of the CNT, which uncovered the plot on November 27. The Commissioner of Public Order, Robertes, a leader of Companys' party, the Esquerra, was arrested as one of the ring-leaders. Altogether over a hundred prominent liberal-bourgeois figures are in jail for complicity in the plot. The plot and Companys' attitude toward the Anglo-French proposal are two hefty straws in the wind. And the Basque and Catalan bourgeois are the decisive sectors of the "anti-fascist" non-proletarian elements. Needless to say that Azaña & Co., who lack even the radicalizing tendency supplied to the Catalan and Basque bourgeoisie by the problem of national minorities, are scarcely lagging behind their colleagues.

4. The Caballero-Stalinist Solution

IS IT not clear that the bourgeoisie, inside and outside Spain, are the mortal enemies of the Spanish proletariat today? But the rulers of the Spanish proletariat cling precisely to these mortal enemies. One can no longer distinguish by a little the policy of Caballero from that of the Stalinists; he has fused with them completely; and the policy they dictate is collaboration, nationally and internationally, with the bourgeoisie.

PRAVDA of November 25th displayed prominently on its front page a special dispatch from the Soviet News Agency office in Valencia:

"Contrary to certain assertions being spread abroad," it quoted Caballero, "the Government of the Republic is not striving toward the establishment of a Soviet system in Spain. The basic aim of the Government is to preserve the regime of the parliamentary democratic republic..... The program of my Government is the program of the unification of all democratic forces, ready to defend parliamentary liberties against the Fascist dictatorship. The coming session of the Parliament in Valencia is a symbol of this complete unity between the Government and the overwhelming majority of the people."

The preposterousness of pointing to the Parliament (Cortes) as a symbol of unity scarcely requires pointing out. Ages ago, historically speaking, back in February, this Cortes was elected under an agreement which Caballero himself then criticised as giving completely false weighting to the liberal-bourgeoisie on the coalition tickets; a large part of its membership has gone over to the fascists or fled the country. To this outlived, decrepit body Caballero assigns "the unification of all democratic forces!" And woe to the revolutionary Socialist who demands that in its place be created a National Congress of Delegates of Factory, Militia and Peasants' Committees; Caballero and the Stalinists denounce him as a "Trotskyist-fascist," "provocateur," etc. etc.

If there is any doubt about the "line," Ambassador Rosenberg and Consul-General Ovseenko's speeches, redolent with praise of Azaña, Companys & Co., point the way.

Complete subordination to the bourgeois-state: that is the solution of Caballero-Stalinism. But the bourgeoisie itself is linked to the Anglo-French bloc, which in turn arrives at agreement with the Italo-German bloc. And if the logic of this situation is permitted to unfold to the end, we shall have from the heavy pen of Comrade Ercoli, or another trained seal of the Hotel Lux, a series of articles in INPRECOR, telling how the relation of forces turned out to be unfavorable to the Spanish proletariat.....

5. The Anarchists

The Anarchists make no bones about their distrust of their bourgeois allies. When the bourgeois and Sta-

linist press attempted to minimize the thwarted Catalan plot as the work of individuals, the CNT "Solidaridad Obrera" bluntly described the plot as a class phenomenon. When Ovseenko attacked the POUM and the bourgeois press eagerly seconded him, the CNT served notice that it had not forgotten that this self-same liberal-bourgeoisie had so far despaired of democracy but a few months before as to call for a "strong regime to put an end to the anarchy."

But **in practice** the Anarchists are little better than the Socialists. After a whole series of controversies in which it solidarized itself with the POUM against the bourgeois-Stalinist combine, the CNT agreed to solve the recent cabinet crisis in Catalonia by throwing the POUM out. The price of CNT agreement was to relinquish to it the Ministry of Defense; but the whole point of the new governmental combination was to destroy the power of the workers' committees in the militias and to centralize military control in the remnants of the military caste. The CNT sold out for nothing.

Yet the Stalinists do not trust the CNT, as the vicious editorial in the "Daily Worker" of December 18 demonstrates:

"Unable themselves to confront the workers desiring unity, regardless of their political affiliation, those Anarcho-Syndicalist leaders who have fought against a unified command, centralized discipline, and the strengthening of one central state power, find the Trotskyite counter-revolutionaries valuable forces to instigate rifts in the anti-Fascist front."

The Stalinists are right, too, in their distrust. For though the Anarchists, having no consistent proletarian policy, deserve no confidence whatsoever, yet they are so deeply imbued with anti-capitalist traditions that even when they align themselves with the bourgeoisie, they balk at the concrete implications of the alliance. That means only one thing: that a really revolutionary force could carry the masses of the CNT along with it in the fight for a really revolutionary war against the Fascists. But left to themselves, the Anarchist solution, despite all mitigating factors, will be the solution of Caballero-Stalinism.

6. The POUM

The tragedy of the immediate situation of the POUM scarcely lies in the success of the Stalinist-bourgeois combine's ousting of the POUM from the government. The tragedy, rather, is that the POUM's entry into the Peoples Front Government set up on September 26th **left no revolutionary force to continue the campaign for a revolutionary war against fascism.** It requires no copious quotations—though available—to prove that the POUM could not both be in the government and build independent workers' organs of action, nor could the POUM carry on a consistent campaign for the revolutionary slogans—land to the peasants, workers control of production, freedom for Morocco, etc. etc.—which were completely alien to the POUM-endorsed cabinet. To defend before its own left wing the entry into the Generalidad, the POUM had to characterize the new government as a revolutionary-socialist instrument; then why any other instrument? The POUM, it is true, occasionally and particularly when it suffered some setback, remembered to repeat one or another of its old slogans; but they could not carry conviction. Why, for example, so much heat against subordinating the workers' militia to the cabinet in which the POUM itself sat? As a result, the inevitable course unfolded: enhanced by the prestige of all the workers' organizations but with all strategic ministries, posts, etc. in the hands of the bour-

geoisie, the government moved from September 26 to December 14 not left but right. So much so that even the POUM, though still clinging to the government, was compelled to admit the unraveling of the revolution (it was Juan Andreda, one of the POUM theoreticians, who had been completely silent during the previous months, who was permitted to say this in the last weeks).

Nevertheless, willy nilly, the POUM is out of the government. The significance of this fact is not to be underestimated, even though the POUM was not consulted in precipitating the situation. Certainly the POUM no longer has the grand opportunity which it had in September, when all the instincts of the great masses of the CNT, its traditional anti-capitalist heritage, could have been mobilized by a bold refusal of the POUM to

participate in any but an All-Workers Government. That opportunity is lost, irrevocably. Now, the POUM will at the best win adherents more slowly. Nevertheless, the opportunity now open to the POUM is the most significant, perhaps, that faces any proletarian party anywhere in the world.

The POUM has only to cease its gyrations and resolutely to unfurl the banner of revolutionary Marxism and to inscribe upon it the necessary tasks of this moment: Land to the peasants! Freedom and Independence for Morocco! Workers' control of the factories! For democratically-elected committees in the factories, fields and militias! For a National Congress of Committee Delegates! All Power to the National Congress!

The Strike Movement Begins

BY ARNE SWABECK

A NUMBER of strikes are crashing the periphery of the great industrial combines. They have the appearance of vanguard skirmishes, attempting to seek out the weak spots on the enemy's flanks and gathering forces the while for a mass attack. Soon this may culminate in a mighty test of strength in the steel and the automobile industries. Probably these numerous strikes, now taking place, are the harbingers of a new great strike wave.

Industry is in the grip of restlessness and ferment. The direction of the forces set into motion by this ferment may not yet be entirely clear. The workers may not follow very closely the curves of the industrial production chart, nor do they study comparative statistics of wages and profits. The meaning of the production index of the Federal Reserve Board, recording for October last 98.9 percent of the 1928 average, while mass unemployment remains, is perhaps not so clearly understood by them. Alongside of fabulous dividends to stockholders, employees in many industries have received a bonus; but the lean pay envelope does not measure up to the demands of the rising cost of living. The turn to recovery did not bring the much-wanted economic security, the pressure of increasing speed-up on the conveyor system remains, and above all there is a growing recognition amongst ever broader working class layers of the need for protection through an economic organization of their own, not subject to labor relations boards, nor dominated by the industrial corporations. For the first time in many years this general ferment is taking root in the mass production industries.

The strikes take on varied forms, sit-down strikes, stay-in strikes, or massing on the picket lines. Even company unions have become saturated with the general ferment. Through all of it, it is possible to trace the line or conflict between the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. Open rivalry within individual unions or local central bodies is not yet particularly apparent. At the present moment the A.F. of L. is quiescent while the C.I.O. has become by far the strongest center of organization.

Wave of "Sit-Downs"

The strikes have for their objective primarily the establishment of trade union organization. But in every instance the specific character is determined by the degree of organizational advance made. The most elementary form of these strikes is the shop action, sit-down. In the automobile industry these have become so numerous,

arising entirely spontaneously at the mere drop of a hat without awaiting official sanction, that union leaders look askance, fearing a wildcat movement that may interfere with the routine of the planned organization campaign. But they have been in the most cases highly effective. Starting in the accessory plants they quickly spread to the auto plants. One notable instance was the Kelsey-Hayes Company, where 5,000 workers after a ten day sit-down strike gained union recognition and an agreement covering minimum wages.

The potentialities of this movement the manufacturers recognize as well, so much so, that at times the mere threat of action has brought quick results. Some weeks ago one large manufacturing company was notified that the workers would not handle frames sent in by a struck plant. This action served to help liquidate the strike in the frame plant. The workers are not even inclined to tolerate too much temporizing in meeting the demands for union recognition. Thus for instance, at the time of this writing, a sit-down strike started in the Cleveland Fisher Body plant, employing 7,000 workers, because of the company's postponement of a conference with union representatives. Similarly, a remarkable degree of solidarity has been manifested throughout these strike movements. Perhaps one of the best examples in this respect is furnished by the flat glass workers union, whose action also affected very directly the auto industry. This union struck for a closed shop agreement in the five plants of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. The company transferred its orders to the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company plants. Distance did not interfere. Even though these plants were located in various parts of the country, the workers responded quickly and the strike was extended to every one of them, tying them all up completely.

Company Unions Revolt

Similarly the rubber industry, the ship building industry, the radio industry, and others, have all had their quota of strikes and in every instance bringing the C.I.O. unions into action. While in the steel industry developments in the campaign for organization have been less spectacular they have been no less significant. There the most important events have originated in the most unexpected quarters. The greatest conquests of the C.I.O. have been made in the very heart of company unionism. The company unions, so carefully fostered by the steel corporations, and fostered with the intention to be a bulwark against genuine unions, have now made their own "decla-

ration of independence" from the employe organization plan. Representatives of these company unions from no less than forty-two plants between Cleveland and the Atlantic Coast, who recently met in conference, decided to transform their employe council into a C.I.O. Representative Council. In other words, they took the first step toward transforming a whole network of company unions into becoming an integral part of the steel workers industrial union. Theoretically such a possibility could never be excluded. Militants have emphasized before this the favorable opportunities available, at the time of certain conjunctures, for work inside the company unions. But this is the first time that such work has brought concrete results, and certainly the first time that it has brought results on such a grandiose scale. This alone is an eloquent testimony to a growing ferment in the steel industry as well as to the powerful sweep of union organization. A further national convention was planned by the company union representatives who took this first significant step. No doubt, the time for this will coincide with the convention of the steel workers union which has been planned to take place this coming Spring.

The C.I.O. has now announced its plans for a concerted drive to complete organization in the steel and auto industries and to compel these powerful corporations to deal with the unions. If this is carried out—and, in the light of recent events, there need not be the slightest doubt of the fact that the workers are ready to respond—all the scattered strikes, and all militant action, will tend to converge into one gigantic movement, the impact of which is bound to have far flung reverberations. Several important mass production industries are closely connected with the two that are to be the major point of concentration. The unions in these industries are all affiliated to the C.I.O. and all face the problem of becoming stabilized as the recognized representatives of the workers. It is therefore natural to expect that they will all be drawn into this general orbit of struggle. And while the United Mine Workers, the real backbone of the C.I.O., is fully established throughout the mine fields, it also faces the probability of a struggle at the expiration of its present agreement on April 1. So, on the whole, all of these present developments point very definitely toward a new strike wave far greater in scope than anyone hitherto witnessed, and far greater in its significance to the working class.

Effect of Struggles

It is of course inconceivable that such a titanic movement for organization, which is now under way, can be brought to its conclusion without struggles that will cut deeply into the whole social structure of American capitalist society. Its impact upon the working class movement itself is inestimable. But it is possible to say that it holds within its scope the possibilities of enormous and irresistible working class advance. Organization of the most important mass production industries will by itself mean a tremendous step forward to a new position of power not hitherto attained. That, however, may even come to seem insignificant when compared to the actual development of class consciousness that struggles on such a vast scale are bound to engender.

But we cannot afford to close our eyes to the dangers that this movement may be stopped short in its tracks. After all, we still remember that two important strike waves were smashed since the turn toward recovery began, and as a result the workers were robbed of the fruits of their struggle. The union officials had a not inconsiderable part in the responsibility for the smashing of these strike waves. And several of them now hold

the most important positions in the present movement. Moreover, this is an almost entirely new movement, wholly inexperienced, which can easily become a mere prey for unscrupulous agents of capitalism. In view of this it is so much more important not to forget the lessons of the past.

Even the fact that these leaders now begin to frown upon the spontaneous sit-down strikes, a fact that may seem small of consequence, but which can nevertheless become a big question insofar as this is indicative of their attitude. It is entirely true that the American model of sit-down strikes, or stay-in strikes, does not compare at all with the highly developed political quality of the occupational strikes of the French workers. The latter are no doubt inspired by the general trend in France toward working class struggle for possession of the factories. It is true also that such forms of job action as the sit-down strikes which we have experienced here, unless coordinated properly by the unions, may become a disturbing influence in a general and concerted campaign of organization. They may even, if conducted purely passively, divert the actual struggle for organization into futile channels. But such features have not so far been the case. On the contrary, the sit-down strikes have served in the main to stimulate further action. They have represented in essence the ingenuity and resourcefulness of a working class which has hitherto known union leadership in most instances as a force of betrayal and defeat.

One excellent example for the role that the sit-down strikes can play in the class struggle was furnished by the Akron rubber workers, more than a year ago, when this form of action served as an effective prelude to the great Goodyear strike. There is no reason why this valuable form of spontaneous action cannot be coordinated properly to fit into the general strategy of the great struggles for union organization. After all is said and done, the most important principle of strike strategy is the utilization of all the possible means of struggle that the working class possesses and then to bear down with all its weight on the class enemy.

Socialist Action Necessary

The dangers of betrayal cannot be too much emphasized; they exist no matter how great the prospects of success may seem. And these prospects are great indeed. The existence of the C.I.O. itself marks an enormous difference from the conditions of the previous strike waves. Its position in a rival struggle for supremacy against the A.F. of L. compels it to go forward. The movement which it has set into motion must of necessity generate new and more genuinely progressive forces. On the field of action they will also learn the lessons that will help to steel the movement against betrayals.

With this present perspective the trade union movement will once again begin to play a really important role in all the developments of the class struggle. To the same extent it becomes not only true, but doubly true, that no working class party can lay claim to the revolutionary title unless it strikes deep roots in the trade unions. This must be the basis of our approach to the coming struggles. Keying-up the party to a full realization of its responsibility in this situation should be considered the most important task by all revolutionary Socialists. Now above all, the party must get into active trade union work without a moments delay.

TOWARD SOCIALIST CLARITY

ALBERT GOLDMAN

HAIL THE DEBS COLUMN

LOCAL New York of the Socialist party deserves the highest praise for starting a movement which should have been set into motion by our party many months ago. The announcement that a Debs Column of five hundred volunteers was being organized to be sent to Spain to participate in the struggle against the Spanish, German and Italian fascists created an enthusiasm amongst class conscious workers which it would be criminal to permit to be extinguished by inactivity. A campaign is now in order to collect money to send the volunteers over to Spain and to ship arms and ammunition to aid our Spanish brothers.

He is a philistine who sneers at the idea of sending men and ammunition from this country to help in the struggle in Spain. It is so easy to show that the help that we can possibly raise for the Spanish workers is insignificant in comparison with the actual requirements. For a revolutionary Socialist the amount of money that we can raise for arms and the number of men we can send, although very important, are not the only significant factors. What is just as important is the beginning of a campaign to show our solidarity with the Spanish workers and on the basis of that campaign to teach the American workers some elementary lessons in the class struggle.

I do not claim that only revolutionary Socialists would contribute money to send arms and men to Spain. Even liberal democrats will donate for such a purpose. But only revolutionary Socialists will emphasize the need for such a campaign and will conduct it with the greatest zeal and enthusiasm. And it is as certain as anything can be that in connection with such a campaign only revolutionary Socialists will point out that we are sending men and money over to defeat the fascists not simply for the purpose of retaining a decaying capitalist democracy but in order to defeat capitalist democracy as well as fascism through the instrumentality of a workers' government fighting for socialism. And only revolutionary Socialists will point out the lessons of the Spanish civil war to the American workers.

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If the campaign initiated in New York has no other value it certainly will be justified by the fact that it will begin the process of rooting out all remnants of pacifism in the ranks of our party. The consistent pacifists, those who will not permit such a trifle as a civil war against the fascists to move them a hair's breadth from their Tolstoyanism, cannot find a place in such a campaign and what is more they will undoubtedly leave the party. A consummation devoutly to be wished for.

In a letter to Norman Thomas, published in the NEW LEADER, John Haynes Holmes expresses his "amazement and outrage" at the idea of sending men to fight the fascists. "I am shocked beyond words," writes the reverend pacifist, "to discover that officers, or representatives of the party have in true fascist fashion arrogated to themselves this awful privilege of war and peace . . ." He writes as if he were a member of the party and if he is I wonder why he raised no squawk at the war resolution passed at the Cleveland convention. Perhaps he is one of those members who doesn't bother reading resolutions until they are called to their attention by some unexpected event. Or perhaps Holmes did read the resolution and saw nothing to kick about. Which does not speak so much for the resolution. The poor reverend

will have his eyes opened to the fact that the Socialist party is becoming something altogether different from the pacifist organization he would like it to be.

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The NEW LEADER, on the other hand, attacks the campaign from a different viewpoint. It does not agree with the pacifism of Holmes but contends that the "scheme" is bad because the Roosevelt Government will be compelled to react against it and thus prevent any kind of help being sent to the Spanish people. The idea seems to be that if men and arms should be sent to Spain it should be done without any public campaign so that no one will know about it and thus not give the reactionaries a chance to organize a counter campaign.

We are not at all surprised at the attitude of the NEW LEADER. It is in consonance with the whole social democratic conception of avoiding any kind of a mass movement and attempting to accomplish things through peaceful maneuvering. Leaving aside the question whether or not it is possible to gather aid on a large scale by means of a secret campaign, the problem still remains for revolutionary Socialists of arousing the American workers to a sense of solidarity with the Spanish workers and to prepare for the struggle against the American capitalists and fascists. And for this purpose an open, vigorous campaign is essential.

Socialists do not see how the possible adverse action of Roosevelt should deter them from carrying on such a vital campaign for the help of the Spanish workers. On the contrary, the opposition of Roosevelt will show how hollow his defence of democracy really is and it will then become necessary, as part of the campaign to enlist men and collect money, to broaden out the campaign to include a movement against Roosevelt and his supporters.

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An argument that has been advanced by some timid members of the party against the kind of campaign initiated by the New York local is that it will alienate liberals and will not get a favorable response from the workers who would give clothing and medicine but not arms. They will undoubtedly point to the attitude of Holmes as confirmation of their contention. To that revolutionary Socialists will answer that alienating such liberals is quite a gain for the party. And as far as the workers are concerned no one who has the least experience with their readiness to struggle with all weapons in their hands in strikes will fail to understand that the American workers, if they react at all to the struggle in Spain, will adopt the idea of sending arms to the Spanish workers with the greatest enthusiasm. It is a language that they understand.

Revolutionary Socialists will push the campaign for arms and volunteers to help the Spanish workers to the limit. Let the Communists and Social Democrats worry about the liberals and pacifists; we must worry about the Spanish workers.

ANARCHIST CONFUSION LEADS TO OPPORTUNISM

REVOLUTIONARY Marxists have always recognized that the confusion which is part of anarchism would in a critical moment be dangerous to the working class. Anarchism with its flamboyant revolutionary phraseology, its attitude of hostility to all authority, its apparent intransigence in the struggle against the capitalist masters, its open hatred of all reformism, gave the impression to the uninitiated that of all working class currents it alone

would never compromise. But critical Marxists understand that a working class movement requires something more than revolutionary phraseology and good intentions; it demands a correct revolutionary theory and without such a theory the workers will be led into a blind alley whether by anarchism or opportunist socialism.

No one denies the revolutionary qualities of the anarchist workers, their heroism and devotion to the cause of their class. They have been in the forefront of all revolutionary struggles and at the present moment in Spain the courage of the anarchist proletarians is unexcelled. All the more tragic is it that such courage should fail of its goal because of the confusion of anarchist thought. In critical moments anarchist confusion is unable to solve the problem confronting the working class in a revolutionary manner and consequently, wherever it must assume a responsible attitude because it controls working class organizations, its policies coincide with the policies of opportunist socialists.

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If the anarchist movement had any possibilities of leading the workers to victory the situation in Spain afforded it the grandest opportunity. It controlled the majority of the organized workers in the revolutionary center of Spain (Barcelona); it had great influence in all other centers (Madrid, Valencia); it had no recognized reformist group to hold it back such as the Prieto group in the Socialist party; it is not bound to the Soviet bureaucracy as is the Communist party; its prestige amongst the workers is exceedingly great. What else does a movement need, what else can it expect to be able to lead the workers to victory?

And at the beginning of the fascist revolt the anarchist leaders gave the appearance of knowing what they wanted and of acting decisively to get it; they gave the appearance of understanding that it was necessary for the workers to take over complete power and conduct the struggle against the fascists on the basis of that power and not on the basis of the democratic bourgeois regime. The anarchist leaders went along with and aided the masses when they seized the factories; they participated in a united front with other working class organizations; they organized workers committees everywhere; they refused to have anything to do with the bourgeois government which was nothing but an empty shell.

But their confusion in theory brought them into an impossible situation and they extricated themselves by surrendering their cherished dogmas and accepting the ideas not of revolutionary Marxism but of plain and simple opportunism. Opportunism is the certain consequence of confusion of all kinds.

The workers under the leadership of the anarchists seized the factories. That was as it should have been. But then the anarcho-syndicalist idea about the workers operating their own factories, meaning thereby that the workers of a particular shop should control all the operations of that shop, created tremendous confusion. A revolutionary Marxist party would have immediately proceeded to centralize all operations with the workers of every factory participating in the control through their representatives or delegates. It was not long before the need of such centralization became apparent.

At the very beginning of the fascist revolt every political grouping, including the anarchists, had its own militia. Obviously a civil war, or any other kind of war, can not be won without centralized control. The trade unions created their own militia to keep order and fight the counter revolution.

Centralization was absolutely essential. Confronted by a situation which made impossible the functioning of their theories of decentralization, the anarchist leaders readily consented to the need of centralization. But, alas, centralization to them meant a return to the bourgeois demo-

cratic state. Instead of accepting the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, which would have meant the creation of centralized and democratic organs of control of the army, for industry and for the police, through the creation of a workers' government, the anarchists accepted centralization through the instrumentality of a democratic bourgeois government.

And by the action of the anarchist leaders as well as of the leaders of the other working class groups life was breathed into the hollow form of the Company's Government and the task of placing the workers in their "proper" position as a class to be governed but not to govern has been well accomplished by the working class "leaders."

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What is the theoretical and practical justification offered by the anarchist leaders for their actions in Catalonia? One can hardly expect a thorough theoretical justification from the anarchists but we find an attempt made in the INTERNATIONAL REVIEW of December 1936. Read that attempted apology and you will not have to read the pages of the reformist socialists for their justification. The arguments are cut out of one cloth.

According to the article of Roberto, the anarchists in Barcelona had to enter the Company's government because otherwise the Madrid government would not have given any money and no arms could be obtained. And in addition to that Mussolini would not tolerate a Catalonian commune and the democratic governments of France and England would not come to the aid of a workers' Catalonia in case of an attack by Mussolini. Under these conditions is it not better for the anarchists to enter the bourgeois government so that the workers can "ride and manipulate the engines that some good people might want to use against them after the job of defeating the rebels is done"? Where have we heard such arguments before if not in the press of the pitiful and hesitating social democrats?

The logic of the whole argument is as follows. If the workers of one country or of one section of a particular country dare take power into their own hands the foreign capitalist governments will attack them and alone they are too weak to withstand such an attack. Therefore the advanced workers of any one country must wait until the workers of all other countries are ready to make the revolution. We the workers of any particular country must not begin until our brothers of the other countries are ready to do the same thing. And in practice that "theory" works out so that the working class is defeated in each country separately.

A revolutionary Marxist does not say that the Catalonian workers can defy the whole capitalist world. He contends merely that when the Catalonian workers are able to take power they must do so confident that their seizure of power will have inevitable repercussions on the workers of the rest of the world. The workers of one country must begin the revolution and struggle to extend it to all other countries.

Only they who have no faith at all in the revolutionary spirit of the workers can imagine for one moment that the Madrid proletarians would tolerate a government that would sabotage the revolution in Barcelona. Far more likely is it that a single appeal from the Barcelona workers would cause the Madrid Government to change its mind or suffer annihilation at the hands of the workers.

And would the French proletariat remain quiet if the Catalonian workers would appeal for help directly to them and urge them to overthrow the Blum Government if such help were prevented? A bold revolutionary policy on the part of the Catalonian proletarian organizations would mean that Blum and Stalin would be compelled to act or suffer the consequences. And would Mussolini and Hitler attack a Catalonian Workers' Republic? Undoubtedly! But then the only way, following the logic

of the reformists, to prevent such an attack, is to consent to remain under capitalist slavery.

Revolutionary Marxists readily grant all the difficulties in the way: the readiness of both the fascist and "democratic" capitalist powers to pounce upon a workers' government; the hesitation and treachery of many a work-

ing-class leader. But is there any way out other than by a reliance upon the class war on an international scale? Any other path means remaining under capitalism with its inevitable danger of fascism. There are no guarantees of victory but they who are opposed to a bold revolutionary policy guarantee defeat.

Socialist Appeal Association

HELP NEEDED

THE PUBLICATION of a mid-December inner party discussion issue has weakened our financial structure to a point where we are compelled to make an appeal for immediate contributions in order to assure the fulfillment of our four-month plan. That plan, the reader will remember, provides for the publication of an additional inner party issue once every month for four months, that is, up to the convention.

Certainly the response to the first of the inner-party numbers (not the financial response) more than justifies our plan. Comrades have become alive to the problems facing the party and the left wing and are anxious to have more resolutions and more discussion dealing with the inner party situation. That does not mean that every one who took the trouble to write about the draft platform agreed with it. Far from it. It does mean however that most of the comrades who commented on the draft appreciated the fact that the APPEAL took the initiative in pointing out what it deems to be the proper direction for the party to follow in the period immediately ahead of us.

But we must be brutally frank and announce that unless the financial response improves considerably we shall have to leave the plan unfulfilled. That means that either the inner-party issue or the public issue of the APPEAL will be omitted. We have not as yet decided which will suffer in case of continued financial stringency. In the first place we ask the comrades to see to it that neither the public nor the inner party issue should be omitted. And in the second place we ask the comrades to indicate their choice in case the tragic necessity of skipping one of the issues becomes unavoidable.

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APPLICATIONS for membership in the Appeal Association are coming in regularly. Not that we couldn't stand considerable improvement. Of course we have not really begun the drive for membership in a manner which would indicate the necessity of joining immediately. By that is meant that outside of appealing for members through these announcements in the APPEAL no effort has been made to reach the left wingers throughout the country. We can state with great pride that the fountain head of the Association, the Chicago branch, is functioning. The Association meets once a month to discuss problems pertaining to the APPEAL: its policy, the nature of its articles, its function in the left wing and in the party, the role it should play before the party convention, etc.

There are of course differences of opinion on many problems but there is no disagreement on the question of transforming the APPEAL into the official organ of a national Appeal Association. Outside of creating a Board of Associate Editors no step has been taken as yet to take the APPEAL out of the hands of the small group responsible for its launching. That has to be done and very soon. It is necessary first of all to have enough branches of the Appeal Association so that a conference can be called and the set-up of the Editorial Board changed. All for the purpose of making the APPEAL the responsible organ of all party members interested in its welfare. The immediate problem therefore is to increase the membership of the Association and to create branches of the Association in various centers.

Send in your application immediately. If you are lacking the dollar for dues tell us so and we shall wait. But send in your application.

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